

The Education of Ebenezer Scrooge

An Adaptation of Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol for Chorus, Soloists, Narrator and Readers

Music, Lyrics and Adaptation by Richard Trythall

Composed for the St. Stephen's School Chorus under the *Carter Endowment Innovation Award of 2005*

Dedication

The Education of Ebenezer Scrooge is gratefully dedicated to three persons who have played decisive roles in bringing it about: to the memory of Edward C. Carter II, friend, colleague and benefactor who, through the "Carter Endowment Innovation Award of 2005", made this production possible; to Sandra Craig, friend and trustee of St. Stephen's School, who has encouraged this work through her sincere interest in all of the Arts at St. Stephens and most particularly through her generous contribution of the Petrof grand piano now in our possession; and to Philip Allen, friend, colleague and Headmaster of St. Stephen's School for the past sixteen years, who has consistently supported the Arts both through his personal concern and the long-term leadership he has given in renewing the Arts' facilities and restructuring the Auditorium with the requirements of the Performing Arts program so clearly in mind.

Preface

The Education of Ebenezer Scrooge is, first of all, a concert vehicle for mixed chorus. Secondly it is a faithful retelling of Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol employing a narrator, 12 readers (who neither act nor sing) and a mime. Throughout the two acts of this 90-minute event, the chorus is at the center of the story – as carolers, as the voice of the poor, as enthusiastic square dancers, as personification of the thoughts and actions of the principal characters themselves. The musical score contains eleven original numbers: eight for chorus (two of which also include soloists), a duet, a trio and a quartet. These account for 45 minutes of vocal music – one-half of the production time. Additionally the chorus supplies background sound effects and incidental music during the recitation and individual chorus members are called upon to assume brief speaking roles as well.

The chorus, the narrator and Scrooge are on stage throughout the entire performance, while supporting characters enter and exit according to the requirements of their role. The characters - with the sole exception of the costumed mime who performs Christmas Future - are dressed normally (i.e. no costumes and without make-up) and read their parts seated in front of the lectern from which the narrator is reading (see diagram below). There are no props and there is no stage scenery other than chairs and a lectern. No acting is required though proper diction and appropriate expression are, of course, important in projecting each character's personality during the reading. In the first performance of this work (St. Stephen's School, Rome, Italy), the script was read by members of the school faculty. On this occasion, one general rehearsal proved to be sufficient to prepare the reading and correlate the chorus performance with it. (This minimum rehearsal time was essential in securing the co-operation of members of the community who otherwise would not have had the time to take part in the event.)

The script, of course, could also be read by actors and, for that matter, could also be given a far more elaborate theatrical presentation if the occasion warranted. The present format, however, is particularly well suited to the Christmas season since, by permitting a large number of community members to participate in a common effort, it can promote an attractive, family-like atmosphere

which reinforces the community values honored by Dickens' text and creates a uniquely festive occasion. From a musical point of view, this format provides a practical way of organizing a Christmas choral concert into a cohesive dramatic presentation that recounts one of the best-loved stories in the English language while yet maintaining the event's focus on music and the choral performance.

In adapting Dickens' work to this choral format, I have taken a few liberties in order to better integrate music and text. Of necessity, given the amount of time devoted to the musical numbers, I have also eliminated a few episodes of the original story. On the other hand, I have attempted to maintain Dickens' masterful text – his choice of words and rhythm of phrase - as purely as possible and, by the same token, I have attempted to faithfully interpret his message, in all of its many diverse aspects, through the lyrics and music which have been interpolated.

The musical styles which characterize each musical number vary according to the sentiment expressed and range from – to describe only a few - a gospel-like number, Lighten Up, Christmas Present's advice to Scrooge; to the medieval quality of Christmas Day, the *a cappella* carol which opens the performance; to The Fezziwig Jig which is sung over recurrences of the "Roger de Coverley" slip jig - the 17th century tune which Dickens' indicates actually finished the Christmas ball at the Fezziwig counting house.

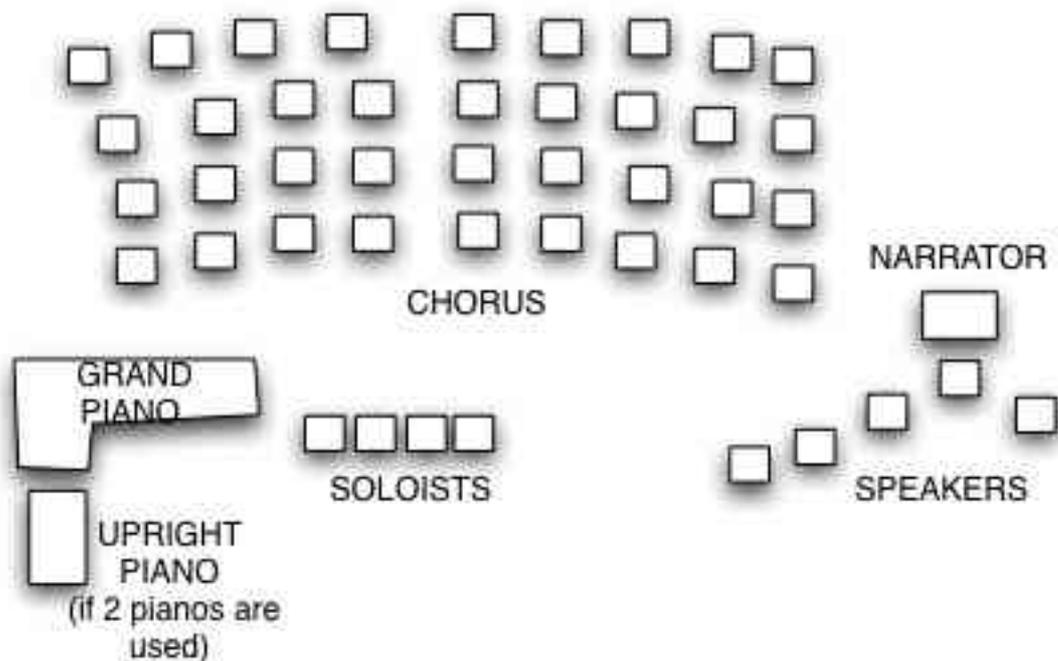
The musical accompaniment is distributed as follows: two of the numbers are performed *a cappella* while the remainder are accompanied by piano. One number, The Fezziwig Jig, requires additional forces as well – violin, violoncello and piano, 4 hands or, alternatively, two pianos, 8 hands.

Richard Trythall

Cast of Readers

<i>Narrator</i>	male/female
<i>Scrooge</i>	male
<i>Bob Cratchit</i>	male
<i>Fred</i>	male
<i>Marley</i>	male
<i>Ghost of Christmas Past</i>	male/female
<i>Belle</i>	female
<i>Young Scrooge</i>	male
<i>Ghost of Christmas Present</i>	male/female
<i>Mrs. Cratchit</i>	female
<i>Martha</i>	female
<i>Tiny Tim</i>	male/female
<i>Ghost of Christmas Future</i>	male/female (this figure is costumed and mimes the part)

Possible Set Up



PUBLIC

Musical Numbers

ACT 1

1. Christmas Day	Chorus SAB	a cappella
2. Oh, Oh, Mister Scrooge	Chorus SATB	with piano
3a. God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen	Chorus SATB	a cappella
3b. Humbug, I Say	Chorus SATB, T soloist	a cappella
4. It's All Perfectly Legal	Chorus SATB	with piano
5. We Understand, Yes We Do	Quartet 2SAB	a cappella
6. The Fezziwig Jig	Chorus SATB	Vln., Vc., Piano/4 hands or 2 pianos/8 hands
7. Hold Me Tight	Duet SB soloists	with piano

Intermission

ACT 2

8. Lighten Up	Chorus SATB, AT soloists	with piano
9. God Will Bless All Your Dreams	Trio SAT	with piano
10. God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen	Chorus SATB	a cappella
11. Merry Christmas, Sir	Chorus SATB	with piano
12a. This Is Love	Chorus SATB	with piano
12b. Lighten Up (Reprise)	Chorus SATB	with piano

The Education of Ebenezer Scrooge

ACT 1

Lights up. The Chorus files on stage while the Narrator, Scrooge and Bob Cratchit take their places. The Chorus remains standing (and will remain so until the end of "Oh, Oh, Mister Scrooge"). The Narrator remains standing while both Scrooge and Cratchit take their seats.

1. Christmas Day

Full Chorus

On this Christmas Morn
When Faith, Hope and Charity were reborn,
On this Christmas Day,
When the Bells ring out, and the Children shout,
Let us celebrate the
victory of the heart,
triumph of the soul,
Brotherhood of Man.
Let us cele-

brate this Christmas Feast
When tidings of peace and joy tamed the beast.
On this Christmas Day,
When all greed was destroyed and our hope was restored.
Let us now remember the
Victory of the heart,
Triumph of the soul,
Brotherhood of Man.
Let us all re-

member Christmas mild
When sharing with others we honor the Child.
On this Christmas Day,
When the Carols sound and our mirth abounds,
Let us understand the
Victory of the heart,
Triumph of the soul,
Brotherhood of Man.
Let us under

stand what is our fate.
In a world of indifference and of hate,
We need Christmas Day
For a ray of hope, for a time of joy.
Without Christmas day, no
Victory of the heart,
Triumph of the soul,
Brotherhood of Man.

First ending: So we sing out (Repeat all 4 verses)

Second ending: Without Christmas, Christmas day.

NARRATOR: Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner! Hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire; secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster. The cold within him froze his old features, nipped his pointed nose, shrivelled his cheek, stiffened his gait; made his eyes red, his thin lips blue; and spoke out shrewdly in his grating voice. A frosty rime was on his head, and on his eyebrows, and his wiry chin. He carried his own low temperature always about with him; he iced his office in the dog-days; and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas.

External heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge. No warmth could warm, no wintry weather chill him. No wind that blew was bitterer than he, no falling snow was more intent upon its purpose, no pelting rain less open to entreaty. Foul weather didn't know where to have him. The heaviest rain, and snow, and hail, and sleet, could boast of the advantage over him in only one respect. They often came down handsomely, and Scrooge never did.

2. Oh, Oh, Mister Scrooge **Full Chorus**

Oh, Oh, Mister Scrooge,
Miser, skinflint, real bad news,
Greed is who you are.
Hoard your money while we starve.

You terrify our loved ones,
You gouge us to the bone,
You smash our lives with numbers
And won't leave us alone!
Won't leave us alone!
Mercy, Mercy, Mercy, Mercy!

Oh, Oh, Mister Scrooge,
Usury is a mortal sin.
Greed, Gold, wipe out life
Surely as a killer's knife.

Month by month you charge us
More than we can earn.
Day by day we're nearer
The point of no return.

CHORALE

Ebenezer, see the Light.
Life is more than you believe.
Not a sum of numbers on a page where there's no heart.
Ebenezer, wake up and see the light,
Ebenezer, before your night is

Come on, Mister Scrooge,
Life is lost in this deluge.
Prison, Workhouse – all the same
The final touch to a life of shame.

You use us when we're children,
Abuse us when we're old.
We're in a vicious circle,
Slaves out in the cold!
Slaves out in the cold!
Mercy, Mercy, Mercy. Mercy!

SCROOGE: Cratchit, was that you mumbling?

BOB CRATCHIT: Mercy, mercy no, Mister Scrooge

SCROOGE: I thought I heard mumbblings of discontent, Cratchit.

BOB CRATCHIT: No, no. Perhaps my teeth were chattering – the cold, you know. It's very cold outside. It's freezing, actually – and inside, too"

SCROOGE: You aren't needing more coal for your fire, are you Cratchit?

BOB CRATCHIT: Well sir, it seems...

SCROOGE: You wouldn't want to be searching for a new position, would you?

BOB CRATCHIT: No, no, mercy me, Mister Scrooge. I was just thinking....

SCROOGE: Of course, you wouldn't.

BOB CRATCHIT: Thank you, sir, no sir. Very good, sir. It's quite warm enough.

SCROOGE: Have you finished copying the letter for Noble?

BOB CRATCHIT: Not quite, Mr. Scrooge, my hands are a bit stiff and...

SCROOGE: Cratchit, he's weeks behind in his rent and I want to send the final notice this afternoon.

BOB CRATCHIT: This afternoon? But today is Christmas Eve and I believe Mr. Noble has several children, Mr. Scrooge!

SCROOGE: All the better. He's sure to be at home with the family when the notice arrives. The constables won't have to chase all over London trying to find him.

BOB CRATCHIT: Yes sir, Mister Scrooge, quite right I suppose... I'll do my best.

SCROOGE: I expect you will, Cratchit!

NARRATOR: Once upon a time – of all the good days in the year, on Christmas Eve – old Scrooge sat busy in his counting-house. It was cold, bleak, biting weather: foggy withal: and he could hear the people in the court outside, go wheezing up and down, beating their hands upon their breasts, and stamping their feet upon the pavement stones to warm them.

The door of Scrooge's counting-house was open so that he might keep his eye upon his clerk, Bob Cratchit, who in a dismal little cell beyond, a sort of tank, was copying letters. The quiet was interrupted by the surprise arrival of Scrooge's one and only living relative, his nephew, Fred.

FRED, *cheerful voice*: A merry Christmas, uncle! God save you!

SCROOGE: Bah! Humbug!

FRED: Christmas a humbug, uncle! You don't mean that, I am sure.

SCROOGE: I do. Merry Christmas! What right have you to be merry? what reason have you to be merry? You're poor enough.

FRED: Come, then, what right have you to be dismal? what reason have you to be morose? You're rich enough.

SCROOGE: Bah! Humbug.

FRED: Don't be cross, uncle.

SCROOGE: What else can I be when I live in such a world of fools as this Merry Christmas! Out upon merry Christmas. What's Christmas time to you but a time for paying bills without money; a time for finding yourself a year older, but not an hour richer; a time for balancing your books and having every item in 'em through a round dozen of months presented dead against you? If I could work my will every idiot who goes about with 'Merry Christmas' on his lips, should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart. He should!

FRED: Uncle!

SCROOGE: Nephew!, keep Christmas in your own way, and let me keep it in mine.

FRED: Keep it! But you don't keep it.

SCROOGE: Let me leave it alone, then. Much good may it do you! Much good it has ever done you!

FRED: There are many things from which I might have derived good, by which I have not profited, I dare say. Christmas among the rest. But I am sure I have always thought of Christmas time as a good time: a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time: the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys. And therefore, uncle, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it has done me good, and will do me good; and I say, God bless it.

BOB CRATCHIT, *applauding*: God bless it, indeed!

SCROOGE: Let me hear another sound from you, Cratchit, and you'll keep your Christmas by losing your situation. You're quite a powerful speaker, sir, I wonder you don't go into Parliament.

FRED: Don't be angry, uncle. Come! Dine with us to-morrow.

SCROOGE: I'll see you in hell, first, nephew!

FRED: But why? Why? I want nothing from you; I ask nothing of you; why cannot we be friends?

SCROOGE: Good afternoon.

FRED: I am sorry, with all my heart, to find you so resolute. But I have made the trial in homage to Christmas, and I'll keep my Christmas humour to the last. So A Merry Christmas, uncle!

SCROOGE: Good afternoon!

FRED: And A Happy New Year!

SCROOGE: Good afternoon!

NARRATOR: His nephew left the room without an angry word, notwithstanding. He stopped at the outer door to bestow the greeting of the season on Bob Cratchit, who, cold as he was, was warmer than Scrooge; for he returned them cordially. In letting Scrooge's nephew out, the clerk had let another person in. He was a portly gentleman, pleasant to behold, and now stood, with his hat off, in Scrooge's office.

SOLICITOR: Scrooge and Marley's, I believe. Have I the pleasure of addressing Mr. Scrooge, or Mr. Marley?

SCROOGE: My partner, Mr. Marley, has been dead for seven years. In fact, he died seven years ago, this very Christmas eve.

SOLICITOR: I have no doubt his liberality is well represented by his surviving partner.

SCROOGE: Liberality? I don't recall that Jacob was liberal in anything, sir

SOLICITOR: At this festive season of the year, Mr. Scrooge, it is more than usually desirable that we should make some slight provision for the Poor and destitute, who suffer greatly at the present time. Many thousands are in want of common necessaries; hundreds of thousands are in want of common comforts, sir.

SCROOGE: Are there no prisons?

SOLICITOR: Plenty of prisons.

SCROOGE: And the Union workhouses? Are they still in operation?

SOLICITOR: They are. Still, I wish I could say they were not.

SCROOGE: The Treadmill and the Poor Law are in full vigour, then?

SOLICITOR: Both very busy, sir.

SCROOGE: Oh! I was afraid, from what you said at first, that something had occurred to stop them in their useful course. I'm very glad to hear it.

SOLICITOR: Under the impression that they scarcely furnish Christian cheer of mind or body to the multitude, a few of us are endeavouring to raise a fund to buy the Poor some meat and drink, and means of warmth. We choose this time, because it is a time, of all others, when Want is keenly felt, and Abundance rejoices. What shall I put you down for?

SCROOGE: Nothing!

SOLICITOR: You wish to be anonymous?

SCROOGE: I wish to be left alone! Since you ask me what I wish, sir, that is my answer. I don't make merry myself at Christmas and I can't afford to make idle people merry. I help to support the establishments I have mentioned: they cost enough: and those who are badly off must go there.

SOLICITOR: Many can't go there; and many would rather die.

SCROOGE: If they would rather die, they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population. Besides – excuse me – I don't know that.

SOLICITOR: But you might know it.

SCROOGE: It's not my business. It's enough for a man to understand his own business, and not to interfere with other people's. Mine occupies me constantly and I would council the same course of action to you. Good afternoon. Cratchit. See this Gentleman to the door and then lock it. Don't admit anyone unless they come on matters of business. Otherwise we'll spend the rest of this afternoon attending to these damnable interruptions.

NARRATOR: The afternoon passed slowly – punctuated by a church bell gruffly striking the hours and quarter and the impatient scribbling of Bob Cratchit's pen. In the main street, at the corner of the court, some labourers were repairing the gas-pipes, and had lighted a great fire in a brazier, round which a party of ragged men and boys were gathered: warming their hands and winking their eyes before the blaze in rapture. Occasional carolers, intent on spreading the Christmas spirit and earning a coin for their effort – notwithstanding the formidable cold, added their voice to the scene as they passed seeking promising doorways where they might proffer their vocal wares. Most avoided the Scrooge and Marley counting house, knowing its owner's scant reputation for generous acts, but, as the end of the work day approached and possible sources of remuneration closed their doors, a large group of well meaning but ill-advised carolers did indeed finally arrive on the doorstep of that very same establishment.

SOUND: The chorus rises during the final sentence of the previous speech. We hear them shuffling their feet to keep warm, perhaps a muffled word or two. They receive their pitch from a pitch pipe then begin singing quite vigorously. (The chorus should be conducted by a chorus member if possible.)

3. God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen **Full Chorus**

God rest you merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay.
Remember Christ our Saviour was born on Christmas Day
Hmmmm.....

SOUND: The chorus continues performing by lowering volume and humming parts underneath the following dialogue:

SCROOGE, *aggravated*: Confound it, what in the name of heaven is that caterwauling, Cratchit?

BOB CRATCHIT: I believe they are wassailing, Mister Scrooge. It's the proper time, you know.

SCROOGE: Never the proper time to make a noise like that, Cratchit.

BOB CRATCHIT: Yes, I suppose so, sir,... just a tradition.

SCROOGE: The only tradition that interests me is the work tradition.... Good, hard, honest work, Cratchit. An honest day's work - that's the ticket. Tell those noise makers to go away and leave me alone!

BOB CRATCHIT: But Mr. Scrooge, it's Christmas Eve and....

SCROOGE: I know it's Christmas Eve, Cratchit, but – all the same - I don't need to have my nose – or my ear rubbed in it. This so-called "Christmas spirit" is pure humbug.

BOB CRATCHIT: I'll try sir...but it's rather a goodly number of persons – a chorus, I would say.

SCROOGE: Tell them to go away. I've got better things to do.

SOUND: Chorus raises volume with end of dialogue and sings text clearly. This will coincide more or less with the third verse of the carol.

BOB CRATCHIT, *attempting to catch the attention of the chorus while they are singing*: Hmmph (clears throat)
Excuse me, kind sirs. Ah.... Ah (louder).... Excuse me.....

SOUND: Chorus finally interrupts its performance. Some expressions of dismay are heard...

BOB CRATCHIT, *when chorus finally stops*: Mr. Scrooge, the owner of this counting house, would prefer it if you would not sing Christmas Carols on his doorstep.

CAROLER 1 (*Caroler parts spoken by Chorus members*): What's he want, governor, Easter carols?

BOB CRATCHIT: No, no. He's just... He's not very fond of Christmas Carols.

CAROLER 1: Tell him to take a good drink of wassail and then he'll be ready.

CAROLER 2: Yes sir, that's the truth. Especially in weather like this.

SCROOGE: You see, Cratchit. That's the real face of "Christmas Spirit" – alcohol – mixed with a good amount of bad manners and unruliness. That's all it amounts to – a rowdy band of youths looking for money.

CAROLER 3: Hey, governor. Don't criticize, we're not beggars....

CAROLER 4: Come on. Let's sing, It's late and I'm freezin

g.

3. Humbug, I Say **Full Chorus with Tenor Soloist**

C: God rest ye merry, gentlemen,

S: **Why don't you go away!**

C: Remember Christ our Savior
was born on Christmas Day

S: **You drink your spirits and shout your songs
And make a noisy fray.**

C: O tidings of comfort and joy, S: **humbug I say;**
C: O tidings of comfort and joy.

S: **Humbug, humbug that's all it is
A ruse for you to play**

C: They found Him in a manger
where oxen feed on hay

S: **You spend the day in useless sport
I'm out a workday's pay.**

C: O tidings of comfort and joy. S: **humbug I say;**
C: O tidings of comfort and joy.

C: Now to the Lord sing praises
all you within this place,
And with true love and brotherhood
each other now embrace;
S. . **I can't abide my fellowman
Don't care to see your face.**
C: O tidings of comfort and joy, S: **humbug I say;**
C: O tidings of comfort and joy.

S: **Now if I could I'd cook the goose
Of each and every one.
You eat too much and drink the rest
You worship only fun.
You squander time, expect a pay
And leave your work undone.**
C: O tidings of comfort and joy, S: **humbug I say;**
C: O tidings of comfort and joy.

SCROOGE, *following applause*: Humbug. You'll not have money from me. Now get away from my door before I turn the dogs loose on you.

(SOUND: Chorus, while sitting down, moves feet to suggest sound of them running away.)

SCROOGE: Heh, heh, Cratchit. That was the magic word for those freeloaders - people who want something for nothing. Speaking of which, I suppose you'll want all day tomorrow off from work.

BOB CRATCHIT: If quite convenient, Sir.

SCROOGE: It's not convenient, and it's not fair. If I was to stop half-a-crown for it, you'd think yourself ill-used, I'll be bound? And yet, you don't think **me** ill-used, when I pay a day's wages for no work.

BOB CRATCHIT: It's only once a year, Mister Scrooge.

SCROOGE: A poor excuse for picking a man's pocket every twenty-fifth of December! But I suppose you must have the whole day. Be here all the earlier next morning!

BOB CRATCHIT: Yes, Mr. Scrooge. Merry Christmas, Sir.

SCROOGE: Bah, Humbug.

NARRATOR: The clerk tidied up his work place, put on his coat and left the counting house with a parting "Merry Christmas" just as the clock struck seven. Scrooge, after assuring himself all was secure, then closed the office and walked out with a final "Humbug" – just to keep the balance straight. He took his melancholy dinner in his usual melancholy tavern; and having read all the newspapers, and beguiled the rest of the evening with his banker's-book, went home to bed. He lived in chambers which had once belonged to his deceased partner, Jacob Marley. They were a gloomy suite of rooms, in a lowering pile of building up a yard. The building was old enough now, and dreary enough, for nobody lived in it but Scrooge. He shut the heavy door and walked through his rooms to see that all was right. He had, momentarily, thought he had seen Jacob Marley's face in the door knocker downstairs and, while he was not given to superstition, this fleeting vision had made him somewhat uneasy. After all he was completely alone in a very large building. The Sitting-room, bed-room, lumber-room were all as they should be. Quite satisfied he returned and double-locked the door. He took off his cravat; put on his dressing-gown and slippers, and his night-cap; and sat down before the fire to take his gruel.

SCROOGE, *as if mulling over his momentary vision*: Marley. Marley? Marley! I could have sworn I saw old-- Ah! Humbug. Marley's been dead these seven years. Humbug. All humbug. What I need is a good night's--

SOUND, begin this underneath Scrooge's speech: Pianist creates soft, metallic rustling sounds by strumming across lower strings of piano with fingers (hold the pedal down) while chorus members produce soft, mournful sounds: "Oohs", "Ahs" "Ssss" impersonating the host of wandering spirits which attend Marley.

SCROOGE: What? What's that?

SOUND: Continue as above

SCROOGE: Something's moving in the wine cellar. It sounds like chains!

SOUND: Continue strumming, occasionally accentuate a string with the scrape of finger nail. Chorus adds random whispers at the same time. Let volume increase slowly.

SCROOGE: Something - is coming! Some - something is coming up the stairs.

SOUND: Continue sound as above, increasing volume, becoming more agitated.

SCROOGE: It's outside my door.

SOUND: Bring the sound to high point and cut it off suddenly. Leave a moment of silence.

SCROOGE: Bah! It's humbug still! I won't believe it.

MARLEY, *in a ghostly manner*: Ebenezer Scrooge! Ebenezer Scrooge!

SCROOGE: How now. What do you want with me?

MARLEY: I want much of you, Ebenezer.

SCROOGE: Who are you?

MARLEY: Ask me who I was.

SCROOGE: Who were you then?

MARLEY: In life, I was your partner, Jacob Marley.

SCROOGE, *skeptical*: Jacob Marley! But you're dead. You died seven years ago.

MARLEY: Seven years ago this very night.

SCROOGE: Can you – can you sit down?

MARLEY: I can.

SCROOGE: Do it then.

MARLEY: You don't believe in me.

SCROOGE: I don't.

MARLEY: Why do you doubt your senses, Ebenezer?

SCROOGE: Because a little thing affects them. A slight disorder of the stomach makes them cheats. You - you can't be a ghost. You may be an undigested bit of beef, a blot of mustard, a crumb of cheese, a fragment of an underdone potato. (*laughs*) There may be more gravy than grave about you, whatever you are! Ah, humbug, I tell ya. Humbug!

SOUND: Short but extremely loud: MARLEY cries out frightfully and the entire Chorus shrieks with him. Pianist rapidly scrapes lower strings with fingernail.

SCROOGE (*shuddering*): Mercy, dreadful apparition!

MARLEY: Do you believe in me or not?

SCROOGE: I do believe in you. You ARE a ghost, Jacob.

MARLEY: Thank you.

SCROOGE: But why - why do you walk the earth? Why do you come to me?

MARLEY: It is required of every man that the spirit within him should walk abroad among his fellowmen, and travel far and wide; and if that spirit goes not forth in life, it is condemned to do so after death. It is doomed to wander through the world - oh, woe is me! - and witness what it cannot share, but might have shared on earth, and turned to happiness.

SCROOGE: And why are you fettered? What is that heavy iron chain coiled around you?

MARLEY: I wear the chain I forged in life. I made it link by link, and yard by yard; by my own free will. Is its pattern strange to you, Ebenezer? Yours was just as heavy and as long as this, seven Christmas Eves ago and you have laboured on it considerably since then, Ebenezer. By now it is surely a heavy chain to carry!

SCROOGE, *preoccupied*: Jacob, Old Jacob Marley, tell me more, speak comfort to me, Jacob!

MARLEY: I have none to give and I cannot tell you all I would. I cannot rest, I cannot stay, I cannot linger. Weary journeys lie before me.

SCROOGE: You travel fast?

MARLEY: On the wings of the wind.

SCROOGE: Ah, seven years dead and travelling all the time.

MARLEY: Seven years, Ebenezer. Seven years of remorse. Do you know that no space of regret can make amends for one life's opportunities misused?

SCROOGE, *with increasing intensity*: But you were always a good man of business, Jacob. You talk as if we had perpetrated some sort of terrible crime, but everything we did was perfectly legal – quite within the law. We weren't murdering anyone. We made legal contracts, abided by them and expected others to do so as well. We were dependable – always there when people needed us. I wish we could have said the same thing about them! How often they defaulted on our loans and we had to foreclose or repossess their property or they couldn't meet the rent payments and we had to throw them out. Our rates were high, but what's wrong with that? We raised prices according to supply and demand. It was their problem if they couldn't keep up with the payments. We didn't force them to borrow our money or rent our property! We kept our eyes on the bottom line – that's what counts, Jacob! It was just good, honest business.

4. It's All Perfectly Legal

Full Chorus

Scrooge:

I'm an honest man,
Honest to the core.
Don't steal my money from the rich,
But only from the poor.
They are weak and have no say,
Defenseless and an easy prey.

Scrooge and Chorus:

I am an honest man.
He's an honest man.
I'm honest to the core.
He's honest to the core.
Won't steal his money from the rich,
But only from the poor.
Scrooge: Just like sheep about to drown,
I can fleece them while they're down.

Scrooge in a formal, resonant, judicial voice:

It's all perfectly legal
With a seal royally regal.
Sanctioned by the powers that reign
And have the most to gain!

Scrooge:

I'm a friendly type.
I'll loan you what you need.
But if your payment's late, my friend,
I'll have to take your deed.
Interest rates are far too high,
If that's a problem, why not die?

Scrooge and Chorus:

I'm a friendly man.
He's a friendly man.
I'll loan you what you need.
He'll loan you what you need.
But if your payment's late, my friend,
He'll have to take your deed.
Chorus: "Mercy", **Scrooge:** Mercy doesn't pay.
Chorus: "Mercy", **Scrooge:** Try another day.

Scrooge:

I'll take you to the bank.
We'll ask the teller clerk:
"According to the daily rates,
how much is mercy worth?"

I'm an alright guy.
I'll rent you space, for sure.
But if you fall behind in rent,
Eviction is the cure.
The rent is far too high, I know,
But, frankly, there's no rent control!

Chorus

I am an alright guy.
He is an alright guy.
I'll rent you space, for sure.
He'll rent you space, for sure.
But if you fall behind in rent,
Eviction is the cure.

Chorus: "Pity", **Scrooge:** Be sure to close the door!
Chorus: "Help us", **Scrooge:** Can't help it if you're poor!

Chorus judicial voice:

It's all perfectly legal
With a seal royally regal.
Sanctioned by the powers that reign
And have the most to gain!

chorus or different soloists each time: It's a way of life.
Scrooge: Business, **Chorus:** Business (chorus response is whispered)
Morning, noon and night
Scrooge: Business, **Chorus:** Business.
Always more to learn
Scrooge: Business, **Chorus:** Business.
Scrooge with enthusiasm: And lots, lots, lots, lots, lots, lots, lots, lots
Everybody: more to earn.
BUSINESS! (Shout)

MARLEY, *incensed:* Business! Mankind is our business. The common welfare is our business; charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence, these are all, our business. The dealings of our trade are but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of our real business on earth! Besides, you know as well as I do that we balanced our books all right, but we balanced them on the backs of the poor and the weak.

SCROOGE, *doubtfully:* But Jacob you always said business is business, you always...

MARLEY, *cutting him short:* Hear me! My time is nearly gone.

SCROOGE: I will, but don't be hard upon me! Don't be flowery, Jacob! Pray!

MARLEY: I am here to-night to warn you, that you have yet a chance and hope of escaping my fate. A chance and hope of my procuring, Ebenezer.

SCROOGE: You were always a good friend to me, Thank'ee!

MARLEY: You will be haunted by Three Spirits.

SCROOGE: Is that the chance and hope you mentioned, Jacob?

MARLEY: It is.

SCROOGE: I -- I think I'd rather not.

MARLEY: Without their visits, you cannot hope to shun the path I tread. Expect the first to-morrow, when the bell tolls One.

SCROOGE: Couldn't I take 'em all at once, and have it over, Jacob?

MARLEY: Expect the second on the next night at the same hour. The third upon the next night when the last stroke of Twelve has ceased to vibrate. Look to see me no more; and look that, for your own sake, you remember what has passed between us.

NARRATOR: When it had said these words, the apparition walked backward from Scrooge; and at every step it took, the window raised itself a little, so that when the spectre reached it, it was wide open.

SOUND: *The chorus begins to moan quietly – a variety of laments and/ or prayers. Pianist strums lower strings (with pedal down). This sound will gradually increase under the following speech – though not enough to overpower the Narrator's lines.*

NARRATOR: Scrooge became sensible of confused noises in the air; incoherent sounds of lamentation and regret; wailings inexpressibly sorrowful and self-accusatory. The spectre, after listening for a moment, joined in the mournful dirge; and floated out upon the bleak, dark night. Scrooge followed to the window: desperate in his curiosity. He looked out. The air was filled with phantoms, wandering hither and thither in restless haste, and moaning as they went. Every one of them wore chains like Marley's Ghost; some few (they might be guilty governments) were linked together; none were free. Many had been personally known to Scrooge in their lives. He had been quite familiar with one old ghost, in

a white waistcoat, with a monstrous iron safe attached to its ankle, who cried piteously at being unable to assist a wretched woman with an infant, whom it saw below, upon a door-step. The misery with them all was, clearly, that they sought to interfere, for good, in human matters, and had lost the power for ever.

SOUND: *Let the sound expand for a moment, then diminish gradually. The sound should vanish along with the Narrator's description of its disappearance.*

NARRATOR, *enters after the sound has clearly begun to diminish*: Whether these creatures faded into mist, or mist enshrouded them, he could not tell. But they and their spirit voices faded together; and the night returned to silence.

SOUND: *ceases totally*

NARRATOR: Scrooge closed the window, and examined the door by which the Ghost had entered. It was double-locked, as he had locked it with his own hands, and the bolts were undisturbed. He tried to say "Humbug!" but stopped at the first syllable. And being, from the emotion he had undergone, or the fatigues of the day, or his glimpse of the Invisible World, or the dull conversation of the Ghost, or the lateness of the hour, much in need of repose; went straight to bed, without undressing, and fell asleep upon the instant.

When Scrooge awoke, he was lying on his bed, fully dressed. Suddenly, the curtains of his bed were drawn aside, and he found himself face to face with an unearthly visitor. It was a strange figure -- like a child: yet not so like a child as like an old man. Its hair, which hung about its neck and down its back, was white as if with age; and yet the face had not a wrinkle in it, and the tenderest bloom was on the skin. The figure itself fluctuated in its distinctness: being now a thing with one arm, now with one leg, now with twenty legs, now a pair of legs without a head, now a head without a body: of which dissolving parts, no outline would be visible in the dense gloom wherein they melted away. And in the very wonder of this, it would be itself again; distinct and clear as ever.

SCROOGE: Are you the Spirit, whose coming was foretold to me?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST, low and soft: I am.

SCROOGE: Who, and what are you?

CHRISTMAS PAST: I am the Ghost of Christmas Past.

SCROOGE: Long past?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: No. Your past.

SCROOGE: And what brings you here?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: Your welfare! Rise and come with me!

SCROOGE: Oh, no, no, No! Not out the window. I am mortal -- not a spirit - and I'm liable to fall.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: Bear but a touch of my hand on your heart and you shall be upheld in more than this!

SOUND: *Pianist rings sleigh bells. Chorus makes sound of children murmuring in play. This serves as background for the following exchange.*

NARRATOR: As the words were spoken, they passed through the wall, and stood upon an open country road, with fields on either hand. The city had entirely vanished. Not a vestige of it was to be seen. The darkness and the mist had vanished with it, for it was a clear, cold, winter day, with snow upon the ground. Scrooge was conscious of a thousand odours floating in the air, each one connected with a thousand thoughts, and hopes, and joys, and cares long, long, forgotten.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: Do you recognize this countryside -- and those children?

SCROOGE: (*gasps*) I know every inch of it. I was bred in this place. I was a boy here! And I recognize the children too -- they were class mates of mine. Hallo! Hallo! (*Scrooge tries to catch their attention.*)

SOUND: *bells and children sound gradually trails off during the following speech.*

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: They can't hear you. These are the shadows of the things that have been. The things that you see have no consciousness of us. Do you recognize that building over there?

SCROOGE: Ah, that building! Yes, I went to school in that dreary place.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: Do you recollect that path?

SCROOGE: Heh! I could walk it blindfolded.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: Come, let us follow it and go inside. What do you see, Ebenezer Scrooge?

SCROOGE: I see a barren school room, rows of desks and a young boy reading.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: A solitary child, alone on Christmas eve, neglected by friends and family.

SCROOGE: Yes, yes, I see. I know that boy – my former self. (*sighs*) Oh. I was so lonely. It was a boarding school, and because of my family situation, I couldn't go home for the holidays – I stayed at the school over recess – I ... got quite a deal of reading done.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: That must have hurt - to be left all alone like that.

SCROOGE: Why should I care about not being with others? After all, they never cared about me!

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: You did well in school?

SCROOGE: I worked hard. I knew I had to earn my own living in the future – no rich parents to help me. I knew if I were to amount to something, I would have to do it all by myself – self-made man, you know. My word is as good as gold on the London Exchange! You can ask anyone there.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: I see. Here is one of your school comment sheets. Signed by a Mr. Allen.

SCROOGE: Oh yes. Our headmaster. A good fellow he was. Always treated me well – which is more than I can say for some of the teachers – or for the students!

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST, *reading*: “Very industrious, remarkably concentrated and focused”- It seems you had particularly high grades in math and economics.

SCROOGE: Those subjects interested me, but so did English. I loved literature - to read books and imagine the stories they recounted. It took me away from reality, I suppose. I was so tender then, I didn't understand the world yet.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST, *reading*: “Unfortunately he remains by himself most of the time, isolated, doesn't join in group activities, has anti-social tendencies, very withdrawn.”

SCROOGE: That's the usual humbug, of course. Do ghosts have report cards?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: I've never heard about it.

SCROOGE: You're lucky! They put the worst drivel in those reports. Schools would be better without 'em. Still, there is some truth in that comment, I never had much time for friends and, if the truth were told, the others didn't have much time for me either. Somehow I just didn't fit in.

5. We Understand, Yes We Do **Young Ebenezer, Trio (SSA)**

Young Ebenezer
People, people everywhere
and not a friend in sight,
My life was oh so solitary,
alone and with no light.
I didn't belong and couldn't join

Excluded from the game.
The others smiled and even laughed
when someone called my name.

Trio

Ebenezer Scrooge, he had it tough
Ebenezer Scrooge, he had it rough
Ebenezer Scrooge, he had the stuff
and he knew he'd had enough!

Young Ebenezer and Trio

It's tough to be an adolescent – yes - when you can't go home
It's tough to be an adolescent – yes - when you're all alone
It's tough to be an adolescent – yes - when you feel left out
Oh yes, we understand, we understand, we understand, yes we do!

Trio

Ebenezer Scrooge, he had it tough,
Ebenezer Scrooge, he had it rough,
Ebenezer Scrooge, he had the stuff
and he knew he'd had enough!

Young Ebenezer

I felt the whole world was a feast,
but I had nothing to eat.
The whole world was so full of music,
but I couldn't find the beat.
The whole world was a big, wide stage
but the part I played was wrong.
The whole world was a family,
but I just didn't belong.

Young Ebenezer and Trio

It's tough to be an adolescent – yes - when you can't go home
It's tough to be an adolescent – yes - when you're all alone
It's tough to be an adolescent – yes - when you feel left out
Oh yes, we understand, we understand, we understand, yes we do!

Trio

Ebenezer Scrooge, he had it tough,
Ebenezer Scrooge, he had it rough,
Ebenezer Scrooge, he had the stuff
Oh yes, we understand, we understand, we understand, yes we do.
He'd had enough!

SCROOGE: Poor boy! I wish.....but it's too late now.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: What is the matter?

SCROOGE: Nothing, Nothing. There were some young people singing a Christmas Carol at my door last night. I should like to have given them something, that's all.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: Let us visit another Christmas of yours - one when you were happy!

NARRATOR: The scene changed immediately and it was plain enough, by the dressing of the shops, that here too it was Christmas time again; but it was evening, in London, and the streets were lighted up. The Ghost stopped before a warehouse door and they entered.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: Do you know this place, Ebenezer?

SCROOGE: Know it! This is the counting house where I was apprenticed! And there's my master, old Fezziwig! Bless his heart, alive again – and there's Dick Wilkins, he was an apprentice along with me. A good fellow.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: And who is that other young fellow?

SCROOGE: Why that's me, of course. How happy I seem. Look at all that food! This must be one of Fezziwig's Christmas Eve parties. He was famous for them – wonderful food, lots of dancing and plenty of guests!

6. The Fezziwig Jig

Chorus with Violin, Cello and piano 4 hands (or with two pianos 8 hands)
based on the slip jig "Sir Roger de Coverley"

(The following responses are given by individual members of the chorus, each of whom arises (and remains standing) when called upon. By the end of the reading, the entire chorus should be standing. In cases of multiple persons - i.e. "three Miss Fezziwigs", "six young followers", etc. - that number of chorus members should rise and give the response together. The final response will permit the remainder of the chorus to stand.)

NARRATOR: In came a fiddler with a music-book

CHORUS MEMBER: and went up to the lofty desk, and made an orchestra of it.

NARRATOR: In came Mrs. Fezziwig,

CHORUS MEMBER: one vast substantial smile.

NARRATOR: In came the three Miss Fezziwigs,

3 FEMALE CHORUS MEMBERS: beaming and lovable.

NARRATOR: In came the six young followers

6 MALE CHORUS MEMBERS: whose hearts they broke.

NARRATOR: In came all the young men and women

VARIOUS CHORUS MEMBERS: who were employed in the business.

NARRATOR: In came the housemaid,

CHORUS MEMBER: with her cousin, the baker.

NARRATOR: In came the cook,

CHORUS MEMBER: with her brother's friend, the milkman.

NARRATOR: In came the boy from over the way

CHORUS MEMBER: trying to hide himself behind the girl from next door

NARRATOR: In they all came, one after another;

CHORUS MEMBER: some shyly,

CHORUS MEMBER: some boldly,

CHORUS MEMBER: some gracefully,

CHORUS MEMBER: some awkwardly,

CHORUS MEMBER: some pushing,

CHORUS MEMBER: some pulling;

NARRATOR: in they all came, anyhow and everyhow

REMAINING CHORUS MEMBERS: and away they all went, twenty couples at once.

Music begins immediately

Altos:

Curtsy 1, Curtsy 2, Curtsy 3, Stop and go
Forward 1, Forward 2, Backward 1, Back in place.

Sopranos:

Curtsy 1 2, Curtsy 2 3, Curtsy 3 4, Stop and go
Forward 1 2, Forward 2 3, Backward 1 2, Back in place

Gentlemen:

Bow to the right, bow to the front, bow to the left, bow to the back.
Step to the right, step to the left, step to the front, step to the back.

(These lyrics will be used each time the accompanying musical patterns occur. Always start text with beginning of couplet even when only one line is sung. These returning patterns are not indicated in the following text.)

Gentlemen:

Stand in place, turn around, back in place.
Stand in place, turn around, clear the space.

Ladies:

Stand in place, turn around, back in place.
Stand in place, turn around, clear the space.

Tutti:

Clear the space.... Clear the space....

Gentlemen:

Promenade, down the path, all the way.
Promenade, down the path, every day.

Ladies:

Promenade, down the path, all the way.
Promenade, down the path, every day.

Tutti:

Now we skip around the ring without a break
Follow your partner holding hands and bake a cake.

Tutti:

Bake a cake..... Bake a cakeBake a cake

Ladies:

Sing a song,
Join the party.
Swing your partner,
Hale and hearty.

To the left now,
To the right now.
Hold me tight.
Hold with all your might.

Gentlemen:

Make a star,
Whoever you are.
Round and round and round and round
Until you think you're falling down!

Ladies and Gentlemen in Response:

Promenade, Promenade,
Promenade, Promenade
Walk the dog, Walk the cat
Walk the cow, Walk the bat!

(Chorus does not sing for 8 bars, but vigorously stomps feet in place.)

Gentlemen, singing again:

Now let's go, make an arch, pass on through.
Hold it high, don't forget, the sky is blue.

Ladies:

Now let's go, make an arch, pass on through.
Hold it high, don't forget, the sky is blue.

Gentlemen:

The sky is blue.....The sky is blue.

Gentlemen:

Make two lines, march along, to the back.
Turn around, come to front, Jill and Jack.

Ladies:

Make two lines, march along, up the hill.
Turn around, tumble down, Jack and Jill.

Tutti:

Now we skip around the ring without a break.
Follow your partner holding hands and bake a cake,
Bake a cake..... Bake a cake..... Bake a cake.

Gentlemen and Ladies in response:

Sing a song, Sing a song,
Join the party. Join the party.
Swing your partner, Swing your partner,
So hale and hearty. So hale and hearty.

To the left now, To the left now,
To the right now. To the right now.
Hold me tight. Hold me tight.
Hold with all your might. Hold with all your might.

Make a star, Make a star,
Whoever you are Whoever you are
Round and round and round and round. Round and round and round

Tutti:

and Round and round and round the Christmas tree.

Gentlemen:

Circle right

Tutti:

Christmas tree

Ladies:

Hang the star

Tutti:

Christmas tree

Gentlemen:

Circle left

Tutti:

Christmas tree

Ladies:

Hang the star as high as you can!

(Again Chorus does not sing for 8 bars, but vigorously stomps feet in place.)

Chorus, now singing in harmony:

That's the way it is
At the Christmas Ball
Dances, games and treats,
Food and fun for all.
I can safely say, and
No one will deny:

Ladies: It wouldn't be Christmas **Gentlemen:** It wouldn't be Christmas

Ladies: It couldn't be Christmas **Gentlemen:** It couldn't be Christmas

Ladies: It shouldn't be Christmas **Gentlemen:** It shouldn't be Christmas

Tutti: On that I'd bet my wig,

Without the Fezziwig jig!

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: Everyone seems to have enjoyed the party.

SCROOGE: Fezziwig was amazing. He knew how to give such wonderful parties.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: But he has not spent much of your mortal money, does he deserve praise for this?

SCROOGE: It isn't that, it isn't that, Spirit. He has the power to render us happy or unhappy; to make our service light or burdensome; a pleasure or a toil. Say that his power lies in words and looks; in things so slight and insignificant that it is impossible to add and count 'em up: what then? The happiness he gives, is quite as great as if it cost a fortune.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: What is the matter?

SCROOGE, *thinking to himself*: Nothing particular....

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST, *insistent*: Something, I think?

SCROOGE: No, well..., I should like to be able to say a word or two to my clerk just now! That's all.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: And who is that pretty girl with whom you were dancing?

SCROOGE *with hesitation*: Isabelle.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: And why is she so radiant ?

SCROOGE: She was always aglow. The only woman I ever loved, you know. I gave her an engagement ring that very evening – that Christmas eve many years ago, during the party. There were at least fifty people there and yet, and yet it seemed – it seemed as if we were the only two people in the room!

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: She loved you. It's written all over her face.

7. Hold Me Tight

Duet: Belle and young Ebenezer

Belle:

Hold me, hold me tight
As we have danced tonight.
Yes, hold me through our lifetime,
Hold me close and never stop.

Young Ebenezer:

What will be our fate?
How will our journey fare?

Belle:

Your touch is the only
Answer I need to know.
So hold me tight.

Belle:

And we will care

Young Ebenezer:

And we will share

Both:

And we will love more each day.

So that the future
will be our present

From the past.

So hold me tight,
So hold me tight.

Young Ebenezer:

You and only you
can touch me through and through,
You soothe my fears and lead me
to the love within my heart.

Belle:
 What will life be like?
 How much of joy or of sorrow?
Young Ebenezer:
 Your touch is the only
 Answer I need to know.
 So hold me tight
Belle:
 And we will care
Young Ebenezer:
 And we will share
Both:
 And we will love more each day.
 So that the future
 will be our present
 From the past.
 So hold me tight
Belle:
 And we will care
Young Ebenezer:
 And we will share
Both:
 And we will love more each day.
 So that the future
 will be our present
 From the past.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: What a touching moment. You did love her, didn't you?

SCROOGE: I was able to talk to her, to be myself with her - tell her about my past, and my dreams for the future.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: And did you listen to hers?

SCROOGE: I did.... Yes...at least I thought I did. I was busy working hard. Jacob and I were opening our counting house and I was frequenting the Exchange on a daily basis. But I was making plans for the future, for both our futures, for our financial security, for all the things we wanted to do...the future seemed so far away and we had so many dreams – you know how foolish young people are about their dreams.... and hopes. *(pauses)* Belle.... she meant so much to me... I.... I don't know how it happened that.....that

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: That you didn't marry? You don't remember? Then let me help remind you.

NARRATOR: This produced an immediate effect. For again Scrooge saw himself. He was older now; a man in the prime of life. His face had not the harsh and rigid lines of later years; but it had begun to wear the signs of care and avarice. There was an eager, greedy, restless motion in the eye, which showed the passion that had taken root, and where the shadow of the growing tree would fall. He was not alone, but sat by the side of a fair young girl in a mourning-dress: in whose eyes there were tears.

BELLE: It matters little to you, - very little. I know that.

YOUNG SCROOGE: Belle, have I changed toward you?

BELLE: When we were engaged, we were both poor and content to be so until, in good season, we could improve our worldly fortune by our patient industry.

YOUNG SCROOGE: Was it better then? Better to be poor?

BELLE: Better, at least, to be happy. You're changed. You were another man, then.

YOUNG SCROOGE: I was a boy! You blame me because I've grown wiser? Have I ever tried to break our engagement?

BELLE: In words, no. Never.

YOUNG SCROOGE: In what, then?

BELLE: In a changed nature; in an altered spirit. In everything that made my love of any value in your sight. Another idol has displaced me.

YOUNG SCROOGE: What idol?

BELLE: A Golden one. You fear the world too much and, in trying to protect yourself from its reproach, your nobler aspirations have fallen off one by one, until the master-passion, Gain, engrosses you. Can even I believe that you would now choose a dowerless girl such as I - you who, in your very confidence with her, weigh everything by Gain: or, choosing her, if for a moment you were false enough to your one guiding principle to do so, do I not know that your repentance and regret would surely follow? I do; and I release you. With a full heart, for the love of him you once were.

YOUNG SCROOGE: Belle!

BELLE: Oh, at first, it may cause you pain to lose me -- a very brief pain. But soon it will be dim, like a half-remembered dream -- an unprofitable dream. And you will be glad to awake from such a dream. May you be happy in the life you have chosen. If this can cheer and comfort you in the time to come, as I would have tried to do, I have no just cause to grieve.

SCROOGE: That's enough, Spirit! Show me no more! Conduct me home!

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: These were shadows of the things that HAVE been. That they are what they are, do not blame me. They are of your doing. Now we..

SCROOGE, *interrupting*: No. No more, Spirit. No more.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: One shadow more! Come! Do you see this man, Ebenezer Scrooge? This man might have been you. And the woman beside him, your wife Belle. And that girl -- that girl might have been your daughter, Ebenezer Scrooge. She might have called you father. She might have brought you a breath of spring-time in the haggard winter of your life.

SCROOGE: I don't wish to see it. I will not look. Show me no more!

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: Do you not want to see the life that Belle has had -- her home, her family. The happiness and fulfillment she has shared and which you might have shared with her?

SCROOGE, *in desperation*: Spirit! Remove me from this place. Remove me! I cannot bear it! Take me back! Torture me no longer!

Black Out.

Intermission

ACT 2

The chorus should enter informally (before stage lights come up) and remain standing in place. The Narrator will also stand in place while Scrooge and Christmas Past will be seated. When the audience is in place, the lights come up.

NARRATOR: As Scrooge struggled with the Spirit, he was conscious of being exhausted, and overcome by an irresistible drowsiness; and, further, of being in his own bedroom. He had barely time to reel to bed, before he sank into a heavy sleep. On the stroke of One, Scrooge awakened suddenly and sat bolt upright in his own bed. He remembered the words of Marley's ghost and wondered from which direction the second spectre would appear. At that moment, nothing between a baby and a rhinoceros would have astonished him very much. Now, being prepared for almost anything, he was not by any means prepared for nothing; and, consequently, when no shape appeared, he was taken with a violent fit of trembling. Five minutes, ten minutes, a quarter of an hour went by, yet nothing came. Then, as he sat in his bed, he became aware gradually of a great blaze of ruddy light, which seemed to shine upon him from the adjoining room. He got up softly and shuffled in his slippers to the door. It was his own sitting-room -- no doubt about that. But it had undergone a surprising transformation. The walls and ceiling were so hung with living green, that it looked a perfect grove; from every part of which, bright gleaming berries glistened and such a mighty blaze went

roaring up the chimney, as had never been known in Scrooge's time, or for many and many a winter season gone. Heaped up on the floor, to form a kind of throne, were turkeys, geese, game, poultry, great joints of meat, sucking-pigs, long wreaths of sausages, mince-pies, plum-puddings, barrels of oysters, red-hot chestnuts, and seething bowls of punch, that made the chamber dim with their delicious steam. In easy state upon this couch, there sat a jolly Giant, glorious to see; who bore a glowing torch, in shape not unlike Plenty's horn, and held it up, high up, to shed its light on Scrooge, as he came peeping round the door.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT: Come in! Come in, Ebenezer Scrooge, and know me better, man! I am the Ghost of Christmas Present! Look upon me! You've never seen the like of me before!

SCROOGE: That's true. You're different from the other Spirit. You're tall, almost a giant. And that large torch you carry -- what do you do with that?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT: I sprinkle this light throughout the world. It provides Christmas cheer to rich and poor alike, but I share it most liberally with the poor and downtrodden since they need it the most.

SCROOGE: And why are you surrounded by all these many different foods and these festive trimmings?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT: Because Christmas day is a joyous day – a holy day, a feast day! An occasion that marks a change for the better. Once a year I make a visit loaded with food and presents, with feasting and entertainment, to remind the world of that joy. Joy within the heart, Ebenezer – true joy - is a wonderful gift. It is the joyous heart that gives the most.

SCROOGE: And is the present so important, Ghost?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT: You've made it for yourself, you know, and I'm going to show you how that present is – the way things really are. So look around you, Ebenezer. Enjoy yourself. Relax! It's Christmas Day and I'm your Christmas Present. I've brought the food, I've brought the drink and I've brought my Christmas light.

8. Lighten Up

Full Chorus with Soloists: Christmas Present and Scrooge

Christmas Present:

I'm gonna Light-en-up

I'm gonna Light-en-up

I'm gonna Light-this-world-up somehow

I'm gonna show my light

I'm gonna shine it bright

I'm gonna light this world up somehow

I'm gonna show my light

I'm gonna end the night

I'm gonna light this world up somehow

(piano vamps while dialogue continues:)

Christmas present: You know, Ebenezer, you need to lighten up too.

Scrooge: Lighten up?

Christmas Present: Yes, you need to lighten up in every way. The first thing you need to do is let yourself go. Open yourself up to others. Put some joy in your life. Stop thinking about business and start thinking about people.

Scrooge: People don't like me.

Christmas Present: How can they? You don't like them! For you, they're just numbers on a paper. The only interest you have in them is measured in percentage!

You gotta Light-en up,

You gotta chill on out,

You gotta shake your world up somehow.

Now don'tcha tighten up,
You've gotta lighten up,
You've gotta shake your world up somehow.

(Scrooge in a questioning voice)

I shouldn't tighten up,
I gotta lighten up?

Christmas present:

You gotta shake your world up somehow.

Scrooge:

I gotta Light-en-up,
I gotta chill on out,
I gotta shake my world up somehow.

I shouldn't tighten up,
I gotta lighten up,
I gotta shake my world up somehow.

I shouldn't tighten up,
I gotta lighten up,
I gotta shake my world up somehow.

(piano vamp)

Christmas Present: That's a start, Ebenezer, but you need to learn lots more. For example, how special Christmas day is. Did you know that families travel far and wide so they can be together on Christmas day?

Scrooge: I didn't know. I ... I don't know much about families.

Christmas Present: And it's a day when the world actually pays attention to the poor and the downtrodden. You know, I visit everyone - on land, at sea, at home, at work, in prison – bringing the hope of peace and brotherhood amongst all people.

Scrooge: Good Spirit, I believe you would get along quite well with my nephew.

Christmas Present: Indeed I do, Ebenezer. He is a man of good will - like Fezziwig and Cratchit. They're people of good will. People who make the best out of what they have, bear no ill will towards others and try to bring joy to all who depend upon them. They light up their part of the world and that's the next thing you need to learn, Ebenezer!
Listen:

Full Chorus:

You gotta Light-en-up,
You gotta Light-en-up,
You gotta light your world up somehow (up somehow).

You gotta show your light,
You gotta shine it bright,
You gotta light your world up somehow (up somehow).

You gotta show your light,
You gotta end the night,
You gotta light your world up somehow (up somehow).

We're gonna Light-en up,
We're gonna Light-en up,
We're gonna light this world up some how (up somehow).

We're gonna show our light,
We're gonna shine it bright,
We're gonna light this world up somehow (up somehow).

We're gonna show our light
We're gonna end the night
We're gonna light this world up some
light this world up some,
light this world up some,
light this world up some,
Light this world up somehow (up somehow).

We're gonna Light-en up,
We're gonna Light-en up,
We're gonna light this world up some how (up somehow).

We're gonna show our light,
We're gonna shine it bright,
We're gonna light this world up somehow (up somehow).

We're gonna show our light,
We're gonna end the night,
We're gonna light this world up some.
How, light, light, light,
Light this world up.
Ebenezer, Wake up and see the light,
Ebenezer, see the Light!

SCROOGE follows the performance closely and at end of song breaks into applause. Chorus sits down during this applause.

SCROOGE: Spirit, take me where you will. Last time I went against my will and learnt a lesson which is working now. If you have anything to teach me, let me profit by it.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT: Then touch my robe, Ebenezer Scrooge! Touch my robe!

NARRATOR: Scrooge did as he was told, and held it fast. The room and its contents all vanished instantly, and they stood in the streets of a London suburb upon a snowy Christmas morning. The Ghost of Christmas Present, with his generous, hearty nature and his sympathy for all poor men, had led Scrooge straight to his own clerk's home. On the threshold of the door, before entering the home, the Spirit smiled and stopped to bless Bob Cratchit's dwelling with the sprinkling of his torch.

SCROOGE: Where've you brought me, Spirit?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT: To the first of many visits tonight - an humble dwelling in an humble street.

SCROOGE: It's humble enough all right.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT: Yet there is happiness here. Come in.

SCROOGE: Who - who are these people? Who's that woman? And the children?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT: These are the family of your clerk, Bob Cratchit. His wife is laying the table for their Christmas dinner. And there, assisting her, is her daughter Belinda. And the young man with the fork in the stuffing -- that's Master Peter Cratchit. And the two little Cratchits and the girl entering beside us is her oldest daughter, Martha. Listen, Scrooge. Listen and learn!

MRS CRATCHIT: Why, bless your heart alive, Martha, my dear, Welcome and merry Christmas to you!

MARTHA: Merry Christmas, Mother!

MRS CRATCHIT: You are late, my dear.

MARTHA: Oh, we'd a deal of work to finish up last night and we had to clear away this morning.

MRS CRATCHIT: Well, never mind so long as you're here now. Sit ye down before the fire and have a warm, Lord bless ye!

MARTHA: Where's father?

MRS CRATCHIT: He's been to church with Tiny Tim. They'll be along directly.

MARTHA (*concerned*): How IS Tiny Tim doing, mother? Any better at all?

MRS CRATCHIT: Sometimes I think he is. And sometimes I think - oh, dear God, if anything should happen to Tiny Tim....

MARTHA: Mother! You mustn't even THINK of such a thing! Here's father.

MRS CRATCHIT: with Tiny Tim on his shoulders!

BOB CRATCHIT: Merry Christmas, everybody! Martha! Welcome, my dear!

MARTHA: Merry Christmas, father! And to you, Tim!

TINY TIM: Merry Christmas, Martha!

MARTHA: Oh, Tim, you darling! Oh, father, I'm so glad to be home.

BOB CRATCHIT: And we're so glad to have you home, Martha.

MRS CRATCHIT: How did little Tim behave in church, Bob?

BOB CRATCHIT: Oh, as good as gold, and better.

TINY TIM: I like church, Mother. They sang the nicest songs. I hope people saw me there.

MRS CRATCHIT: Saw you there? And why, Tim?

TINY TIM: Well, don't you see? Because I'm lame. And if they saw my crutch, it might be pleasant for them to remember on Christmas who it was made lame beggars walk, and blind men see.

BOB CRATCHIT: Oh, bless you, my son.

SCROOGE, *surprised*: Lame? Cratchit never told me he had a child who was lame.

CHRISTMAS PRESENT: He tried, but you were too busy to listen to him. Counting your money, I imagine.

MRS CRATCHIT: Now, children. We're all ready. Your father has prepared his special punch and I have surprises for you. Come, come take your places now. There is stuffing and dressing and plum pudding for all of you. Martha, you take care of Tiny Tim.

MARTHA: Yes, Mother.

MRS CRATCHIT: See that he eats plenty, he must get tall and well. Now, sit down, sit down, everyone!

BOB CRATCHIT: Ah, now, my dears. I'll say grace.

SCROOGE: Spirit, tell me about Cratchit's son.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT: Tiny Tim? He was always a frail child, given to periods of weakness, and over the past few years he has become increasingly lame.

SCROOGE: Will he live?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT: I see a vacant seat in the poor chimney-corner, and a crutch without an owner, carefully preserved.

SCROOGE: Oh, no, no. No, no, kind Spirit! Can he not be spared? Can he not live?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT: If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, Ebenezer, the child will die.

BOB CRATCHIT (*finishing grace*): Amen.

BOB CRATCHIT: And, now, my dears, with such a dinner, a toast. A Merry Christmas to us all. And God bless us!

MRS CRATCHIT: Amen.

TINY TIM: God bless us every one!

BOB CRATCHIT: And, now, I give you a toast to Mr. Scrooge -- the Founder of the Feast!

MRS CRATCHIT, *upset*: The Founder of the Feast indeed! -- who pays you all of fifteen shillings a week! I wish I had him here. I'd give him a piece of my mind to feast on, and I hope he'd have a good appetite for it!

BOB CRATCHIT, *protests*: Oh, my dear -- the children! Christmas Day.

MRS. CRATCHIT: Well, it should be Christmas Day, I'm sure, on which one drinks the health of such an odious, stinging, unfeeling man as Mr. Scrooge. You know he is, Bob! Nobody knows it better than you, poor fellow!

BOB CRATCHIT, *insisting*: My dear, Christmas Day.

MRS CRATCHIT: I'll drink his health for your sake and the Day's, not for his. Long life to him! A merry Christmas and a happy new year! He'll be very merry and very happy, I have no doubt!

TINY TIM: And I say, God bless him, too, Mother. And everyone.

NARRATOR: With that the table exploded with conversation and expressions of excitement about the food. Such a feast for the Cratchit household was indeed a once-a-year event and they made the very most of each and every bite. By and by the feasting came to an end and, much tired by the festivities, Tiny Tim was taken upstairs by Bob and his wife where, in their usual manner, they seated themselves beside his bed to watch over him as he fell asleep. Sleep was not immediately forthcoming, however, for he remained quite excited by the day's rush of activity.

TINY TIM: Wasn't it lovely, father?

BOB CRATCHIT: Yes it was, my dear!

TINY TIM: I think this was the very best Christmas we have ever had. The food was wonderful, Mother!

MRS CRATCHIT: And you're wonderful too, Tiny Tim, but now you should rest and get your strength back.

TINY TIM: Oh, but I do so love to think about everything that happened to day. It's like having the party again.

BOB CRATCHIT: Now it will be even better, son. You'll dream about it -- relive each moment of happiness in your dreams.

TINY TIM: Oh yes, father, that is true. I always have dreams about beautiful things.

BOB CRATCHIT: That's because you are a special person, son.

MRS CRATCHIT: A special person and a very tired little boy, too. Close your eyes now and rest.

TINY TIM: Yes, Mother. Let me hold your hand.

MRS CRATCHIT: There, son.

TINY TIM: How warm your hand is...how good it feels... how hard you work to make us happy....

MRS CRATCHIT: Shhhhhh.....

9. God Will Bless All Your Dreams **Trio: Bob Cratchit, Mrs. Cratchit, Tiny Tim**

Bob Cratchit:

Close your eyes,
Little one,
Now it's time for sleep.

Mrs. Cratchit

Say your prayers,
my beloved,
pray the lord your soul to keep.

Both:

Rest, my child,
Rest, be well.
God will bless
All your dreams.

Tiny Tim:

When I sleep,
life is fun.
I can walk.
I can run.
How I love my dreams.

When I sleep,
I am whole
and the stars
touch my soul.
How I love my dreams.

All:

Rest, my child,
rest, be well.
God will bless
All your dreams.

Tim:

When I sleep,
people smile.
They are kind
all the while.
How I love my dreams.

God walks beside me.
He'll make my dreams come true, I know.
He will bless us everyone.

Bob and wife:
He will bless us everyone.

Bob and wife:
God bless you
and keep you.
God guard you,
Protect you
From all that can harm.

Tiny Tim
Bless my mother,
Bless my father.

All:
God will bless
All your dreams.

Bob and wife:
God will bless, All your dreams, God will bless, All your dreams, God will bless, All your dreams,
All your dreams, God will bless, All your dreams, God will bless, All your dreams, God will bless
May God bless us all.

Soloists return to places and Cratchit family exits during applause.

NARRATOR: There was nothing of high mark in these moments at the Cratchit home. They were not a handsome family; they were not well dressed; their shoes were far from being water-proof; their clothes were scanty. But, they were happy, grateful, pleased with one another, and contented with the time; and when the scene faded, they looked happier yet in the bright sprinklings of the Spirit's torch at parting. Scrooge had his eye upon them, and especially on Tiny Tim, until the last.

Much they saw, and far they went, and many homes they visited, but always with a happy end. The Spirit stood beside sick beds, and they were cheerful; on foreign lands, and they were close at home; by struggling men, and they were patient in their greater hope; by poverty, and it was rich. In almshouse, hospital, and jail, in misery's every refuge, where vain man in his little brief authority had not made fast the door and barred the Spirit out, he left his blessing, and taught Scrooge his precepts.

For its final lesson, the Spirit presented Scrooge with two children - wretched, abject, frightful, hideous, miserable. They knelt down at its feet, and clung upon the outside of its garment. They were a boy and girl. Yellow, meagre, ragged, scowling, wolfish; but prostrate, too, in their humility. Where graceful youth should have filled their features out, and touched them with its freshest tints, a stale and shrivelled hand, like that of age, had pinched, and twisted them, and pulled them into shreds. Where angels might have sat enthroned, devils lurked, and glared out menacing. No change, no degradation, no perversion of humanity, in any grade, through all the mysteries of wonderful creation, has monsters half so horrible and dread. Scrooge started back, appalled.

SCROOGE: Spirit! are they yours?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT: They are Man's. And they cling to me, appealing from their fathers. This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware them both, and all of their degree, but most of all beware this boy, of ignorance, for on his brow I see that written which is Doom, unless the writing be erased. Deny it! And await the consequences!

SCROOGE, *concerned*: Have they no refuge or resource?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT, *with irony*: "Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses?"

NARRATOR: Suddenly, a bell struck midnight. Scrooge looked about him for the Ghost, and saw it not. As the last stroke ceased to vibrate, he remembered the prediction of old Jacob Marley, and lifting up his eyes, beheld a solemn Phantom advancing towards him like a mist along the ground. It was shrouded in a deep black garment, which concealed its head, its face, its form, and left nothing of it visible save one outstretched hand. When it came beside him, Scrooge bent down upon his knee. The Phantom was tall and stately and its mysterious presence filled him with a solemn dread. He knew no more, for the Spirit neither spoke nor moved.

During the above, a figure - preferably a dancer or mime - costumed in black as described, slowly and menacingly enters the stage area in front of Scrooge. This figure will execute all the movements as described by the Narrator.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS FUTURE: *points directly at Scrooge then slowly indicates a distant point.*

SCROOGE, *who is now the only seated figure*: I am in the presence of the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS FUTURE: *continues to point in same direction.*

SCROOGE: You are about to show me shadows of the things that have not happened, but will happen in the time before us. Is that so, Spirit?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS FUTURE: *inclines head slightly as if nodding assent.*

NARRATOR: Although well used to ghostly company by this time, Scrooge feared the silent shape so much that his legs trembled beneath him, and he found that he could hardly stand when he prepared to follow it. The Spirit paused a moment, as observing his condition, and giving him time to recover.

But Scrooge was all the worse for this. It thrilled him with a vague uncertain horror, to know that behind the dusky shroud, there were ghostly eyes intently fixed upon him, while he, though he stretched his own to the utmost, could see nothing but a spectral hand and one great heap of black

SCROOGE: Ghost of the Future! I fear you more than any spectre I have seen. But as I know your purpose is to do me good, and as I hope to live to be another man from what I was, lead on! Lead on! The night is waning fast, and it is precious time to me, I know. Lead on, Spirit!

NARRATOR: The Ghost silently conducted Scrooge through several streets familiar to his feet; and as they went along, Scrooge looked here and there to find himself as he might be in the future, but nowhere was he to be seen. Instead, they entered poor Bob Cratchit's house; the dwelling he had visited before; and found the mother and the children seated round the fire.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS FUTURE: *during the preceding speech, the Ghost moves around stage slowly and finally comes to the side of the Cratchit family which has entered the stage once again - but without Tiny Tim. The Ghost points steadfastly at this group during the following scene.*

SCROOGE: Spirit! Why - why have you brought me here again? Here to Bob Cratchit's home? And why is it so quiet? So very quiet and hushed?

MRS. CRATCHIT: *(weeping)*

MARTHA: Mother... Mother, please don't cry.

MRS. CRATCHIT, *in tears*: Oh, my son. My little son. Tiny Tim. I loved him so.

MARTHA: Oh, Mother dear, you mustn't. It's almost time for father to be home. Don't let him see you crying.

MRS. CRATCHIT: Yes. Yes, Martha. I'll try.

MARTHA: He's late tonight.

MRS. CRATCHIT: He walks slower than he used to. And yet I've known him to walk very fast indeed with Tiny Tim on his shoulder.

MARTHA: So have I, Mother.

MRS. CRATCHIT: But Tim was light to carry. And his father loved him so that it was no trouble: no trouble--

MARTHA, *interrupting*: Here's father now.

MRS. CRATCHIT: Bob!

BOB CRATCHIT: Good evening, my dear.

MRS. CRATCHIT: You're late, Bob.

BOB CRATCHIT: Yes, I'm sorry, my dear. I - I went to the church yard today. I wish you could have gone with me. It would have done your heart good to see how sweet and green a place it is. But you'll see it often, I promised him. Yes, I promised Tiny Tim we'd walk there every Sunday.

MARTHA: Father, dear.

MRS. CRATCHIT: It's God's will, Bob.

BOB CRATCHIT: Yes.... I know.... I'm trying to understand that, but.... You know, I can still feel him riding on my shoulders when I walk.... *(to himself)* and the warmth of his hand....

SCROOGE: Oh, harsh Spirit. Is there no remedy? Are there no doctors to treat this illness? Can you not give me hope that this tragic end may be altered? That Tiny Tim may live?

NARRATOR: The Phantom glided onwards, without response, and suddenly Scrooge found himself in the heart of the London Exchange, amongst the merchants, who hurried up and down, and chinked the money in their pockets, and conversed in groups, and looked at their watches, and trifled thoughtfully with their great gold seals; and so forth, as Scrooge had seen them so often do. The Spirit stopped beside one little knot of business men. Observing that the hand was pointed to them, Scrooge advanced to listen to their talk.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS FUTURE: *During the previous speech, the Cratchits exit and the ghost moves towards the chorus to point at the chorus members who speak the following parts.*

(The gentlemen from the chorus recite standing in place.)

MAN 1. No, I don't know much about it, either way. I only know he's dead.

MAN 2. When did he die?

MAN 1. Last night, I believe.

MAN 3. Why, what was the matter with him? I thought he'd never die.

MAN 1. God knows...

MAN 4. What has he done with his money?

MAN 1. I haven't heard. Left it to his Company, perhaps. He hasn't left it to me. That's all I know.

MAN 2: It's likely to be a very cheap funeral, for upon my life I don't know of anybody to go to it. Suppose we make up a party and volunteer?

MAN 4. I don't mind going if a free lunch is provided. (laughs)

MAN 1. Come to think of it, I'll bet I was his best friend;

MAN 3: What?

MAN 4: We used to stop and speak whenever we met. Bye, bye! (laughs)

NARRATOR: Scrooge knew these men well, and looked towards the Spirit for an explanation. He was at first inclined to be surprised that the Spirit should attach importance to conversations apparently so trivial; but feeling assured that they must have some hidden purpose, he set himself to consider what it was likely to be. They could scarcely be supposed to have any bearing on the death of Jacob, his old partner, for that was Past, and this Ghost's province was the Future. Nor could he think of any one immediately connected with himself, to whom he could apply them. But nothing doubting that to whomsoever they applied they had some latent moral for his own improvement, he resolved to treasure up every word he heard, and everything he saw; and especially to observe the shadow of himself when it appeared. For he had an expectation that the conduct of his future self would give him the clue he missed, and would render the solution of these riddles easy.

The Phantom glided on into the street. The spectre's finger pointed to two persons meeting. Scrooge advanced to listen again, thinking that the explanation might lie here. He knew these men, also, perfectly. They were men of

business: very wealthy, and of great importance. He had made a point always of standing well in their esteem: in a business point of view, that is; strictly in a business point of view.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS FUTURE: *The ghost now indicates the chorus members who are speaking these parts.*

MAN 1. How are you?

MAN 2. How are you?

MAN 1. Well! Old Scratch has got his own at last, hey?

MAN 2. So I am told. Cold, isn't it?

MAN 1. Seasonable for Christmas time. You're not a skater, I suppose?

MAN 2. No. No. Something else to think of. Good morning!

NARRATOR: Once more Scrooge was surprised. Why was the spectre showing him another such trivial scene and who could this person be whose death elicited such contempt and derision? Scrooge considered this as he looked about searching for his own image on the street; but another man stood in his accustomed corner, and though the clock pointed to his usual time of day for being there, he saw no likeness of himself among the multitudes that poured in through the Porch. It gave him little surprise, however; for he had been revolving in his mind a change of life, and thought and hoped he saw his new-born resolutions carried out in this.

SCROOGE: Spectre, time is short. Speak to me now before it is too late. Who is this man who has died? I most likely know him. Has he no friends? Is there no one to mourn the poor creature? No one to follow his casket to the grave? Perhaps they'll give him a green grave at least, like poor Tiny Tim?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS FUTURE: *During the previous two speeches the ghost slowly changes position and, pointing toward the space immediately in front of Scrooge, begins to approach Scrooge gradually. It will arrive in position at the end of the following speech and will remain in that position until the Carol begins and the Ghost flees.*

NARRATOR: Without answering the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come conveyed him to a dismal wretched, ruinous churchyard. Here, then, the wretched man whose name he had now to learn, lay underneath the ground. Walled in by houses; overrun by grass and weeds, the growth of vegetation's death, not life; choked up with too much burying; fat with repleted appetite. The Spirit stood among the graves, and pointed down to one.

SCROOGE: Before I draw near to that stone to which you point, answer me one question, Spirit. Are these the shadows of the things that Will inevitably be, or are they only the shadows of things that May be? Men's courses will foreshadow certain ends, to which, if persevered in, they must lead, but if those courses be departed from, the ends will change. Say it is thus with what you show me!

NARRATOR: Receiving no answer from the impenetrable Phantom, Scrooge crept towards the grave stone, trembling as he went and, following the Phantom's finger, he read the name inscribed on the stone of the neglected grave:

SCROOGE, *pause before continuing*: Ebenezer Scrooge! Am I, then, that man who has died so friendless and without helping those I could? No, Spirit! Oh no, no, Spirit! hear me! I am not the man I was. I will not be the man I must have been. Why show me this, if I am past all hope? Assure me that I yet may change these shadows you have shown me, by an altered life! I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future. The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach. Oh, tell me I may sponge away the writing on this stone! Spirit, I beg you! Tell me, speak to me, give me Hope! I pray you, give me a sign!

SOUND: *Chorus arises immediately during final line. They begin singing "God Rest you merry, Gentlemen" triumphantly. After singing the first two lines, they should lower the volume by humming to permit Scrooge's "voice over". This should continue as a background accompaniment for most of the following scene. From here on out the chorus remains standing.*

10. God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen

Full Chorus

God rest you merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay.
Remember Christ our Saviour was born on Christmas Day
Hum.....

SCROOGE (*pauses, as if listening to the singing*): Why, what's this? It's my own drupe. Oh! I'm home. In my own bed. In my own room. I am here: the shadows of the things that would have been, may be dispelled. They will be. I know they will! I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future! The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me!

NARRATOR: Scrooge scrambled out of bed. He was so fluttered and so glowing with his good intentions, that his broken voice would scarcely answer to his call.

SCROOGE: Oh, Jacob Marley! Heaven, and the Christmas Time be praised for this! I say it on my knees, old Jacob, on my knees. I don't know what to do! I am as light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel, I am as merry as a school-boy. I am as giddy as a drunken man. A merry Christmas to every-body! A happy New Year to all the world! Hallo here! Whoop! Hallo!

SOUND: Chorus increases volume and returns to singing the first verse of the carol's text immediately after Scrooge says "Hallo here!". Sing two lines as before, then lower volume and continue to hum underneath the following.

NARRATOR: Scrooge's hands were busy with his garments all this time; turning them inside out, putting them on upside down, tearing them, mislaying them, making them parties to every kind of extravagance. Eventually, having managed to clothe himself, he frisked into the sitting-room, and stood there: perfectly winded.

SCROOGE: There's the saucepan that the gruel was in! There's the door, by which the Ghost of Jacob Marley entered! There's the corner where the Ghost of Christmas Present sat! There's the window where I saw the wandering Spirits! It's all right, it's all true, it all happened. Ha ha ha!

NARRATOR: Really, for a man who had been out of practice for so many years, it was a splendid laugh, a most illustrious laugh. The father of a long, long line of brilliant laughs! Running to the window, he opened it, and put out his head. No fog, no mist, no spirits; clear, bright, jovial, stirring, cold; cold, piping for the blood to dance to; Golden sunlight; Heavenly sky; sweet fresh air; merry bells. Oh, glorious! Glorious!

SCROOGE: Hey young fellow, there in the street, what's to-day?

BOY (*chorus member*): Eh?

SCROOGE: What's to-day, my fine fellow?

BOY: To-day? Why, Christmas Day.

SCROOGE: It's Christmas Day! Then I haven't missed it. The Spirits have done it all in one night. They can do anything they like. Of course they can. Of course they can. Hallo, my fine fellow!

BOY: Hallo!

SCROOGE: Do you know the Poulterer's in the next street but one, at the corner?

BOY: I should hope I did.

SCROOGE: An intelligent boy! A remarkable boy! Do you know whether they've sold the prize Turkey that was hanging up there? Not the little prize Turkey; the big one?

BOY: What, the one as big as me?

SCROOGE: What a delightful boy! It's a pleasure to talk to him. Yes, my buck!

BOY: It's hanging there now.

SCROOGE: Is it? Go and buy it, and tell 'em to bring it here, that I may give them the direction where to take it. Come back with the man, and I'll give you a shilling. Come back with him in less than five minutes, and I'll give you half-a-crown!

BOY: Aye, Aye, sir.

SCROOGE: My goodness, he's off like a shot. A fine young man. I'll send the turkey to Bob Cratchit's! He shan't know who sends it. It's twice the size of Tiny Tim. What a fine surprise that will be for them!

NARRATOR: After dispatching the turkey along with a cab and the young boy to Cratchit's home in Camden town, he dressed himself "all in his best", and at last got out into the streets. The people were by this time pouring forth and Scrooge regarded every one with a delighted smile. He looked so irresistibly pleasant, in a word, that three or four good-humoured fellows said, "Good morning, sir! A merry Christmas to you!" And Scrooge said often afterwards, that of all the blithe sounds he had ever heard, those were the blithest in his ears.

11. Merry Christmas, sir **Full Chorus**

Merry Christmas, sir,
Merry Christmas, madam.
I wish the very best to you
and every Eve and Adam.
We are all one family
Together with hope and charity.

So Merry Christmas, sir,
and Merry Christmas, madam.
We wish the very best to you
and every Eve and Adam.
Christmas is our time to share
The hope and love that's in the air.

The twenty-fifth of December,
Is the day I'll always remember.
'Tis the day that I found the light
After a long, long night.

I'm happy you are here
and thrilled that I am too!
From now I'll keep this Christmas day
in all the things I do.
I will spread this Christmas cheer
Three-hundred-sixty-five days of the year.

I'm (We're) happy you are here
and thrilled that I (We) am (are) too!
From now we'll keep this Christmas day
in all the things we do.
I will help my fellowman
And share his burdens where I can.

Yes, I will live in the past, (Merry Christmas)
the present and the future. (Merry Christmas)
And I will repay the mercy
That Christmas showed to me.

Merry Christmas, one
Merry Christmas, all
I hope your Christmases are each
Especial to recall.

What delight and joy it is
to season life with Christmas bliss.

So Merry Christmas, one
and Merry Christmas, all
I hope your Christmases are each
Especial to recall.
Honor them in acts of kindness.
Remember Man is our true business.

The twenty-fifth of December
Is the day I'll always remember.
'Tis the day that I found the light
After a long and troubled night.

Solo: It's a way of life
Scrooge: Christmas Chorus: Christmas
Solo: Morning, noon and night
Scrooge: Christmas Chorus: Christmas
Solo: All throughout the year
Scrooge: Christmas Chorus: Christmas
All: the joy, joy, joy, joy, joy, joy, joy and light are here!
MERRY CHRISTMAS!

SCROOGE (*euphorically, begins speaking before applause ends*): Merry, Merry Christmas, Merry Christmas, indeed...yes, quite..... every Eve and Adam, yes, yes.... Merry..... (to himself) Oh, my goodness. Here comes the fellow I treated so badly yesterday....(*excitedly*) My dear sir, My dear Sir. How do you do? I hope you succeeded yesterday in your endeavour to raise money for the poor. It was very kind of you to come visit me. A Merry Christmas to you, sir!

SOLICITOR: Mr. Scrooge?

SCROOGE: Yes, That is my name, and I fear it may not be pleasant to you. Allow me to ask your pardon. And will you have the goodness to accept a donation of (*whisper confidentially*)

SOLICITOR: Lord bless me! My dear Mr. Scrooge, are you serious?

SCROOGE: If you please, Not a farthing less. A great many back-payments are included in it, I assure you. Will you do me that favour?'

SOLICITOR: My dear sir, I don't know what to say to such munificence.

SCROOGE: Don't say anything, please, Come and see me. Will you come and see me?

SOLICITOR: I will, indeed, sir.

SCROOGE: Thank 'ee, I am much obliged to you. I thank you fifty times. Bless you!

NARRATOR: Scrooge went to church, and walked about the streets, and watched the people hurrying to and fro, and patted children on the head, and questioned beggars, and looked down into the kitchens of houses, and up to the windows: and found that everything could yield him pleasure. He had never dreamed that any walk -- that anything -- could give him so much joy. Then in the afternoon he paid a visit to his nephew's where, in fact, he joined in the family's Christmas dinner with great pleasure. He had enjoyed imagining his nephew's surprise when he wished him a Merry Christmas, but was even more delighted at his own feelings as he sat down to dinner among -- yes -- among his very own family.

But he was early at the office next morning. Oh, he was early there. If he could only be there first, and catch Bob Cratchit coming late! That was the thing he had set his heart upon. And he did it; yes he did! The clock struck nine. No Bob. A quarter past. No Bob. He was full eighteen minutes and a half, behind his time. Scrooge sat with his door wide open, that he might see him come into the Tank.

Bob's hat was off, before he opened the door; his comforter too. He was on his stool in a jiffy; driving away with his pen, as if he were trying to overtake nine o'clock.

SCROOGE, *feigning anger*: Hallo! What do you mean by coming here at this time of day.

BOB CRATCHIT: I am very sorry, sir, I am behind my time.

SCROOGE: You are? Yes. I think you are. Step this way, if you please.

BOB CRATCHIT: It's only once a year, sir, It shall not be repeated. I was making rather merry yesterday, sir.

SCROOGE: Now, I'll tell you what, my friend, I am not going to stand this sort of thing any longer and... and therefore I am about to raise your salary!

BOB CRATCHIT: Mr. Scrooge, are you quite yourself?

SCROOGE: No, no, thank Heaven, I'm NOT quite myself. A merry Christmas, Bob! A merrier Christmas, Bob, my good fellow, than I have given you for many a year! I'll raise your salary, and endeavour to assist your struggling family, and we will discuss your affairs this very afternoon, over a Christmas bowl of smoking bishop, Bob! Make up the fires, and buy another coal-scuttle before you dot another i, Bob Cratchit.

NARRATOR: Scrooge was better than his word. He did it all, and infinitely more; and to Tiny Tim, who did NOT die, he was a second father. He became as good a friend, as good a master, and as good a man, as the good old city knew, or any other good old city, town, or borough, in the good old world. He had no further intercourse with Spirits, but lived upon the Total Abstinence Principle, ever afterwards; and it was always said of him, that he knew how to keep Christmas well, if any man alive possessed the knowledge. May that be truly said of us, and all of us! And so, as Tiny Tim observed, God Bless Us, Every One!

12. Finale and Reprise: This is Love/Lighten Up **Full Chorus**

This, Oh, this is love,
An opening to the world.
Now I know the gift of charity
And the joy that sharing brings.

Hope has sprung anew
Just when the game seemed at end
And now I know what
Christmas is all about.

And I will live
And I will learn
To use the gift of each day
So that the future
will be our present
from the past.

(Oh, This is love
Oh, This is love)

Now I'll take the time
To think of those in need,
to say a kindly word
and to lend a helping hand.

When we do these things
With all the love we have,
You'll find your heart will
Feel just like Christmas day.

And we will live
And we will learn
To use the gift of each day
So that the future
will be our present
from the past.

And we will live
And we will learn
To use the gift of each day
So that the future
will be our present
from the past.

(Oh, this is love
Yes, this is love!)

attacca:

12b. Finale and reprise: Lighten Up **Full Chorus**

You gotta Light-en-up
You gotta Light-en-up
You gotta light your world up some how (up somehow)

You gotta show your light
You gotta shine it bright
You gotta light your world up somehow (up somehow)

You gotta show your light
You gotta end the night
You gotta light your world up somehow (up somehow)

We're gonna Light-en up
We're gonna Light-en up
We're gonna light this world up some how (up somehow)

We're gonna show our light
We're gonna shine it bright
We're gonna light this world up somehow (up somehow)

We're gonna show our light
We're gonna end the night
We're gonna light this world up some
Light this world up somehow (up somehow)

We're gonna Light-en up
We're gonna Light-en up
We're gonna light this world up some how (up somehow)

We're gonna show our light
We're gonna shine it bright
We're gonna light this world up somehow (up somehow)

We're gonna show our light
We're gonna end the night

We're gonna light this world up some
How, light, light, light,
Light this world up!
Ebenezer, wake up and see the light
Ebenezer, see the light!